

## **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

Good afternoon, my name is Gloria Sciara, and I am the Chair of the Historic Landmarks Commission. On behalf of the Commission, I would like to welcome you to tonight's meeting. I will now call to order the August 14, 2002, meeting of the Historic Landmarks Commission.

- A. To arrange an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act to participate in this public meeting, please call either (408) 277-4576 or (408) 998-5299 (TTY) at least two business days before the meeting.
- B. When addressing the Commission, please approach the Commission, identify yourself and state your address for our records. After you have finished speaking, please write your name and address on the speaker's list at the end of the table.

An agenda has been placed on the end of the table for your convenience.

AGENDA  
ORDER OF BUSINESS

**11:30 a.m.**

**1. ROLL CALL**

**All Commissioners present.**

**2. ORAL PETITIONS**

This portion of the agenda is reserved for persons desiring to address the Commission on any matter not on the agenda. Speakers are limited to 2 minutes. The law does not permit Commission action or extended discussion on any item not on the agenda except under special circumstances. If Commission action is requested, the matter can be placed on the next agenda. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff for reply in writing.

**None.**

**3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- a. Update on the St James Square Housing RFQ, Senior Center relocation and Discussion and Recommendations Regarding the St. James Square Design Guidelines

**Dolores Mellon, RDA, stated that the Agency will be issuing an RFQ for the First Church of Christ Scientist site for market rate housing. The RFQ is scheduled for the 8-27-02 City Council meeting. The site is owned by the Agency, and the RFQ will not include the Letcher's Garage site to the west. Mellon stated that after receiving responses to the RFQ, a meeting will be scheduled with the HLC St. James Park Design Guidelines Committee to discuss the guidelines.**

**Commissioners asked about preservation of the Church, and Mellon stated that the RFQ will specify preservation of the historic building. Mellon also stated that the Senior Center is planned to relocate to the Guitar Center site on N. Second, and that the relocation would call for the demolition of that building.**

**Commissioners asked that the RFQ be sent to them as well as a list of who the RFQ is sent to. They also requested that the issue be agendized for discussion at the September 4, 2002 meeting. Copies of the DPRs were also requested.**

**Ellen Garboske, PAC SJ, stated that Letcher's Garage is important to the district and that there have been numerous ideas for its reuse including loft housing and a transportation museum.**

**Patt Curia, PAC SJ, stated that the organization is concerned about the First Church and does not recommend any proposals that preserve the façade only.**

**Curia also noted her concern regarding the potential loss of the Guitar Center building, also known as the S&H Green Stamp building.**

- b. Discussion and Recommendations Regarding the Draft South First Area Strategic Development Plan

**Dolores Mellon, RDA, introduced the Plan and went over the public process that has resulted in the current draft. Mellon stated that the SoFA Strategic Development Plan Committee, a public body, determines the content of the plan.**

**Commissioner Polcyn explained that the Committee will review development proposals for the area. Ms. Mellon confirmed that the RDA will check in with the Committee regarding the goals of the plan, and accomplishment of those goals over time. Mellon also explained that this plan along with the Diridon Plan will be subject to the upcoming Downtown Strategy EIR. The strategic plans will go to City Council for review and acceptance, but will not be adopted until certification of the EIR.**

**Comments from the Commission and public follow:**

**1. Height: Commissioners stated their concern regarding the proposed heights in the SoFA Plan both in the near and long term. They noted the historic significance of the area, and its success due in large part to its historic buildings and pedestrian scale. Commissioners requested that an illustration be added to the plan mapping the proposed heights relative to the location of historic buildings and accompanied with photos of each historic building. An example is the map developed for the Historic House Moving project. Another suggestion was to provide overlays of maps to judge proposed heights in comparison to existing historic resources.**

**The building heights proposed in the “near term plan” on page 59 of the draft, were acceptable with a few exceptions where identified historic buildings are located and do not reflect the 5 to 9 story heights described in the plan.**

**In concluding remarks it was stated that the proposed building heights in the long term plan are unacceptable.**

**2. Organization of the Draft Strategic Plan: Other concerns included the belief that information on the history of the area and its historic significance are buried well into the document and are not at the front where that information might better inform readers and the process.**

**3. Historic Significance: Commissioner Polcyn, a member of the SoFA Plan Committee, voiced concern regarding the current identification of the buildings on the diagram “Historic Buildings & Core” on page 68 of the draft and how the respective historic status of each is defined and interpreted for regulatory purposes. Polcyn offered to provide an explanation to the SoFA Committee.**

**4. Design Guidelines:** Commission members felt that Design Guidelines should be developed for the district.

**5. Comments from the Public:**

Tom Simon, PAC SJ, noted his alarm that this planning effort is taking place in an area that appears to be successful in its own right without the assistance of the RDA. He noted that both SoFA and San Pedro Square are successful without intervention. Simon stated that the scale of proposed development is problematic. If such development envelopes are included in the plan, they will lead to the loss of historic buildings in the area. The plan should state that the profile for the area should stay as it is. Simon also stated that the San Jose standard for determining historic significance under CEQA is too conservative. Simon also stated his belief that the planning process had not been adequately publicized.

Patt Curia, PAC SJ, stated her concern regarding a committee composed of property owners whose interest is financial return.

Ellen Garboske, PAC SJ, stated that when historic resources are involved in a planning effort, there should be more than newspaper announcements done. Staff responded by explaining that public outreach also included meeting notification via mailouts to property owners and business owners in SoFA, and monthly updates to the Historic Landmarks Commission on the progress of the SoFA Plan. Garboske also noted the success of low-rise, pedestrian-friendly commercial districts in Mountain View and Sunnyvale.

Commissioners and members of the public also cited Santa Cruz, Palo Alto, Campbell, Los Gatos and Saratoga as examples of successful pedestrian friendly commercial districts.

The SoFA Strategic Development Plan Committee will meet August 27, 2002 at the Hyatt Sainte Claire from 5:30 to 8:00 in the second floor St. Claire Room.

Commissioner Paim moved that Commissioner Polcyn review the synopsis from this meeting prior to full Commission review and adoption at the September 4, 2002 HLC meeting, in order to provide comments for the August 27 SoFA meeting. Commissioner Legaspi seconded and the motion passed unanimously. (6-0-0)

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

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Template: E:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Templates\Normal.dot  
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Creation Date: 08/15/02 5:20 PM  
Change Number: 2  
Last Saved On: 08/15/02 5:20 PM  
Last Saved By: CDamkroger  
Total Editing Time: 0 Minutes  
Last Printed On: 08/28/02 3:40 PM  
As of Last Complete Printing  
Number of Pages: 5  
Number of Words: 1,132 (approx.)  
Number of Characters: 6,456 (approx.)